

# The Shakespeare Newsletter

Vol. X, No. 6

"Knowing I lov'd my books, he furnish'd me . . ."

December, 1960

## Memorial Theatre Turns Deficit To Profit in Outstanding 100th Season

In giving the annual report for the 100th Season in 1959, Sir Anthony Eden, new President of the Board of Governors, announced that a \$56,000 deficit in 1958 had been turned to a \$4,200 profit in 1959. An attendance of 384,539 was recorded for a weekly average of 11,309 during the 34 week season. The figures represent 97.2% of the box office capacity. A fund of \$28,000 has been started for future company tours.

At the meeting Nevill Coghill praised the current season's offering of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Twelfth Night*, and *The Winter's Tale*, for the emphasis on verse speaking and the scholarly interpretation of the plays. He appreciated the fact that "the characters speak this year as if they loved what they are saying."

Mr. Peter Hall replied that verse speaking was a "vexed question," and that "We have to build up a new tradition, and a new way of doing things because we seem to have lost it in our modern theatre." Mr. Hall announced that the current season had a favorable press on five of the six plays and that up to August of 1960 the average attendance at the theatre was 99% of capacity.

To insure the success of a permanent company, the Memorial Theatre has rented the Aldwych Theatre in London where classic and modern plays will be shown. A company of 90 actors will supply both companies, with a nucleus of about half having three year contracts for stability. Success for the London venture is already indicated by the fact that the Keith Prowse agency has made a deal to take seats for one-quarter of the London theatre for the next three years. The arrangement involved a guarantee of \$700,000. *The Duchess of Malfi* by John Webster and *Twelfth Night* are scheduled for London productions in the first season which begins on December 15th. The new stage in London has been described by Edmund Gardner of *The Stratford-upon-Avon Herald* as the "nearest thing to an open stage in a proscenium theatre." The similarity to the Stratford stage will make transition easy for actors who will alternate between the theatres.

Of interest to American and Canadian visitors to Stratford, Canada, was Robert Speaight's blistering criticism, as the *Stratford Herald* called it, of Michael Langham's Memorial Theatre production of *The Merchant of Venice*. Mr. Speaight declared that he wished "that Dante had reserved a special place in his inferno for clever young men." He found the play over-produced because the director had first produced the play in Canada with a three-sided audience in mind. Thus "All movement tends to become circular. There is no stillness."

## 8th Canadian Festival Breaks Records; 1961 Season Extended to 14 Weeks

Figures announced for the 8th Annual Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Ontario, Canada, reveal that a total of 203,780 persons saw the ninety-nine performances of *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Romeo and Juliet* last summer. Average attendance for the season stood at 91.2 per cent of capacity. Spectators paid a total of \$683,514 leaving a net profit of \$64,308.73. A sobering item in the annual report indicated that a bond mortgage of \$534,300 is outstanding to which must be added the annual interest. The Canada Council granted \$75,000 for expenses.

The ninth season in 1961 will run for fourteen weeks — the longest to date — from June 19 to September 23. Scheduled for production are *Coriolanus* and *Love's Labour's Lost* to be directed by Michael Langham, and *Henry VIII* to be directed by George McCowan.

Among the stars returning for the ninth festival are Paul Scofield, Douglas Campbell, Bruno Gerussi, and Eleanor Stuart.

## Shakespeare's Works on Records Released in U.S.A.

The Shakespeare Recording Society, Incorporated, of New York City has announced that it is preparing recordings of the complete works of Shakespeare and offering them to the public through regular purchase or on a "book club" basis with premiums for annual membership. The plays, produced by the capable organization known as Caedmon Records, are available in stereo or monaural form on long playing 33 1/3 long playing records.

The text for the records is described as "the complete stage version" edited by G. B. Harrison of the University of Michigan. Currently available are *Macbeth*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Othello*. Starring in these and the coming plays are Sir John Gielgud (Leontes), Sir Ralph Richardson (Caesar), Sir Michael Redgrave, Sterling Holloway (Porter), Claire Bloom (Juliet), Anthony Quayle, and other equally distinguished artists.

Gift recordings and a wood-cut portrait of Shakespeare by Lionel Dillon are available for Charter Members.

Clifton Fadiman has declared that "This project, noble in its vision, lordly in its dimensions, promises to be a Must for any intelligent family's record library. As one who has admired Caedmon's skilful work from the start, I have every confidence in its ability to supply the ear and the mind with classic, living Shakespeare."

## SHAKESPEARE PAPERS AT NCTE DRAW THRONGS

The remarkable vitality of Shakespeare was revealed at the National Council of Teachers of English Convention in Chicago on November 25 when over 300 teachers virtually stormed a room which had only 40 chairs. Fifteen minutes before the three papers were to be read two long corridors were jammed. Many saw the state of affairs and left, but others kept arriving. SNL's editor, Chairman of the Section on "Teaching Shakespeare", attempted for half an hour to get a new room assignment and lastly a public address system but his efforts were fruitless. Finally he announced that the speakers would speak from the corner of the two corridors where the speaker could be seen from either end.

The chairman also announced that copies of the three papers would be duplicated and sent to all present who would leave their names and addresses. Over 200 of those present left their names. The meeting in the corridors was probably one of the most unusual in the history of the NCTE.

On the program were Hardin Craig of the University of Missouri whose paper was entitled "In the Teaching of Shakespeare Avoid Avoidance," the editor who spoke on "Teaching Shakespeare - Past and Present," and Louis A. Haselmayer of Iowa Wesleyan whose subject was "Aims and Practices in Teaching Shakespeare." The last paper was not delivered because the earlier confusion took up a third of the time allotted. Professor Haselmayer preferred that his paper not be digested for SNL, but it will be duplicated and distributed with the others in the near future. The digests appear on page 45.

## B. Iden Payne to Direct at Oregon Festival in 1961

Professor B. Iden Payne of the University of Texas and for six years director of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon has been added to the visiting staff of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival for the 1961 season. Mr. Payne was seen last at the Festival in 1956 when he directed *Cymbeline* and acted the part of Friar Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet*.

The 1961 season will feature *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, *1 Henry IV*, and Ben Jonson's *Alchemist*. From August 17th onward for two weeks it will be possible to stay five days and see five plays. The plays are also played in rotation for the rest of the season. The 1961 season will

## Phoenix Festival Offers Three Plays in April

The Phoenix Little Theatre in Arizona will offer a tragedy, comedy, and history, during its fifth annual Shakespeare Festival next April. Hal Chidnoff of the PLT will direct *Hamlet*, Dr. James W. Yeater of Arizona State University will direct *The Merchant of Venice*, and Ralph J. Holly of Arizona State College will direct *Richard III*.

A Shakespeare Studio is conducted one night each month from January until the Festival begins.

be the longest thus far, being open for 42 consecutive nights from Monday, July 24 to Sunday, September 3. Reservations are already being accepted.

## S E L

### New Periodical Appears in January

SEL - Studies in English Literature: 1500-1900 published by the Department of English at Rice Institute will appear in January 1961. The periodical has a novel policy in that each of the quarterly issues will be devoted to a particular field of literature. The winter issue soon to appear will be devoted to The English Renaissance; the spring issue to Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama; the summer issue to Restoration & Eighteenth Century; and the autumn issue to Romantic & Victorian.

In addition to historical and critical studies, each number will contain an analytical review of the year's most significant scholarship in each period. Subscription is available at \$5.00 per year in the U.S. and one guinea abroad. Individual issues will cost \$1.50 each.

Carol Camden of Rice Institute in Houston, Texas, is the Editor. A distinguished Editorial Board in each field will read the papers. Among them are Don Cameron Allen of John Hopkins, Douglas Bush and Alfred Harbage of Harvard, G. B. Harrison of the University of Michigan, Maynard Mack of Yale, Lionel Stevenson of Duke, and Merritt Y. Hughes of Wisconsin.

Manuscripts in all fields are invited.

Season's Greetings  
From the Editor and his  
Contributing Editor Associates



## Hotson's Jack-in-the-Box Staging

When in 1774 Edward Capell began to conjecture about the appearance of the Elizabethan stage, he started a controversy which has generated a great deal of heat but little light in the intervening years. The discovery of the De Witt drawing of the Swan Theatre in 1888 not only served to add impetus to investigating scholars, but it confused them as it still does us today by its deviations from what we consider practical stage conditions. In the years since the publication of John Cranford Adams' *The Globe Playhouse* in 1942 controversy has raged around the existence of the inner and upper stages to such an extent that it is today fashionable not to accept his theoretical reconstruction.

Whether Adams' version is correct or not, some kind of inner and upper levels are necessary and all reconstructions must make provisions for them.

In 1953, in an article in the summer issue of *The Sewanee Review*, Dr. Hotson declared that the existence of the inner and upper stages in the back wall of the stage was mythical and that the Elizabethan stage was an amphitheatre with the audience sitting on all sides. (Cf. *SNL*, III:4 (Sept. 1953), p.25;32) In 1954 Hotson extended his case with *The First Night of Twelfth Night*, and in 1959 completed his case with *Shakespeare's Wooden O* (published in the U. S. on March 7, 1960, by Macmillan). In it he claims to have settled the appearance and use of the Elizabethan stage.

Were the ideas set forth as theories they might be called fascinating, but since Dr. Hotson claims to have discovered the ultimate truth, his book must be called one of the most provoking I have ever read. My margins are covered with questions, doubts, exclamation marks, and ejaculations. I have the greatest admiration for the scholarship of Dr. Hotson. I will follow him in anything, but he must give me unambiguous and logical evidence to consider. On the basis of the evidence so far offered, most readers will find it impossible to concede him his conclusions that what we call the rear of the stage contained the gentlemanly audience and that stage business and acting were oriented in that direction; that the tiring house was beneath the stage and that actors entered and exited through trap doors in the floor; and that the curtained mansions into and from which actors moved and used as their "within" were at the left and right of the stage and did not obstruct sight lines.

All the "evidence" to the contrary notwithstanding, I find it impossible to believe that the conditions of the medieval mobile pageant wagon and the temporary court stages were introduced without alteration into the permanent public theatres.

Evidence is adduced in which street pageants apparently did have tiring houses beneath the stage, but the actors entered the stage from curtained booths at the ends of the wagon which remained curtained. Dr. Hotson cites Spanish examples which are, I think, ambiguous, but does not mention the unambiguous street theatre in Louvain of 1594 where a stage set on trestles has the expected curtained rear wall, nor the Flemish street theatre of 1607 built on the same plan. (Illus. 13 and 21 in Hodges, *The Globe Restored*)

Since Dr. Hotson does admit that crowds, soldiers, and props did emerge from the pair of double doors depicted on the Swan drawing (c.1596), why must he insist that the actors had to use trap doors which at best must have been extremely inconvenient? If the gentlemen on the stage were not blocking the doors for the crowds and props, why should they be blocking them for entrances and exits of actors?

All this is the more illogical when we note that every time an actor makes his entrance or exit, he must do so in jack-in-the-box fashion into an open trap in the floor or into curtains which are drawn to conceal his popping up and down. If the exits of two characters in different directions is to be concealed, two sets of curtains must be drawn on opposite sides of the stage. Dr. Hotson cites an example from the *Massacre at Paris* in which

I find the curtains are drawn and undrawn at least ten times in the space of 200 lines — each time blocking the view of the spectators. And he concludes this example by saying "So much for one preliminary attempt at realizing the resource and suppleness of Shakespeare's stage. . . ." (Bold type mine) How long could Elizabethans and Jacobean tolerators stand dumb while action and speech was taking place on the other side of the curtains? Stinkards though he persists in calling the popular audience throughout the book, they could not be so treated, and there is concrete evidence from German travelers that the audience could see from all parts of the theatre.

It has already been indicated that with other doors opening on the stage, it was not at all necessary to enter through traps from below. If we concede that devils and witches entered through traps, what must happen to the uncounted references where "door" is mentioned in the directions? What happens with discoveries in beds and at desks in studies; with banquets brought on; with processions; with the "Look where he comes!" speeches; with exiting in different directions; with carrying off of dead bodies; with exit fighting, with crossings of the stage from one door to another? What of the characters who remain concealed behind curtains? To me it would seem the most confusing job in the world to be one of the two vizarded attendants who had the drawing of curtains — silk, of course, so they would not take up too much room. Dr. Hotson tells us that all we have to do is believe, to forget about anything after the 17th Century, and it will be credible.

So, then, on the basis of mere practicality it seems impossible to conceive that there were transpicious or transparent mansions made of silken curtains on the ends of the stage which to Hotson had a transverse axis rather than one of depth. The staging is further complicated when these mansions were two stories high for "above" scenes. The erecting of floors, ladders, and drawing of curtains is far too complicated to have long endured, if it ever existed.

The presences of the tiring house under the stage leads to another remarkable revelation by Dr. Hotson, namely that what have always been interpreted as the supports of the Swan stage were actually windows giving light to the actors' dressing room below! Presumably there were more windows on the sides and back. That panes might be broken and that the light would be obscured by the audience crowding the stage render the theory as impractical and improbable as that actors were using the area for entrances.

To foster his claim for these windows, Dr. Hotson has resorted to evidence that has more than one interpretation. The Fortune contract tells us that the stage is to be "paled in below with good, stronge, and sufficient newe oken bourdes" Dr. Hotson assures us that it was only the front that was so covered, the sides having windows. This he derives from another passage saying that the playhouse is to be erected "With a Stadge and Tyreinge howse to be made erected & setupp within the saide fframe with a shadowe or cover over the saide Stadge . . ." A few lines below the contract says that the stage is to be "Contryved and fashioned like unto the Stadge of the saide Plaie howse called the Globe With convenient windowes and lightes glazed to the saide Tyreinge howse." (I cite the unpunctuated version from Irwin Smith's *Shakespeare's Globe Playhouse*, 1956.) Hotson italicizes the "With" clause as being crucial in his argument for windows in the tiring house. Note, now, that the first quotation tells us that the tiring house is to be "within" the

frame. Hotson of course desires the tiring house under the stage so he says: No question but that 'within the said Frame' means 'in the enclosed yard'. It cannot mean 'inside the house', where we have unwarrantably presumed the tiring-house to be; for to talk of erecting the platfo'm stage inside the house would be complete nonsense." But the adjacent lines go on to tell us that the stage is "to extend to the middle of the yarde of the saide howse." "Within the frame" then could possibly mean inside the building because the frame is to be tiled as the next lines tell us. Then follows the specific passage about the stage being "paled in below" with oaken boards; there is no statement that windows are to be included. This is followed by the "windows and lightes" glazed to the said tiring house. The juxtaposition of stage and tiring house makes it entirely possible that the intent was to have windows behind the stage making the rear wall look like the side of a house; or else the windows were in the outside wall of the theatre. Hotson's placing of a semi colon after "Globe" and before "With" also leads to the interpretation that the tiring house and stage were separate.

There is also a slight but very important ambiguity if not misreading of the Hope theatre contract in 1613. Here the contract reads that the carpenters shall set up "a fitt and convenient Tyre house and a stage to be carryed or taken awaie, and to stande vpon tressells good, substanciall, and sufficient for carryinge and bearinge of such stage..". Here I submit that the oversight is in the "a" before the word stage - that is, there will be a stage and a tiring house, and that they are not one and the same. If the tiring house is not within the frame of the Hope theatre, then it is quite possible that it was a removable structure adjacent to the removable stage. If it can be proved that there ever was a tiring house under a permanent stage, the utter impracticality of movement through trap doors into curtained mansions might suggest that the actors dressed below but went up behind the stage to make their entrances.

The references which Dr. Hotson cites to mounting, ascending, vaulting, and climbing, the stage are often just ambiguous enough to make the movement figurative rather than actual. Totally unambiguous, as I read it, is his reference to the following lines:

Tarlton, when his head was onely seen,  
The Tyre-house doore and Tapistrie betweene,

Set all the multitude in such a laughter,  
They could not hold for scarce and houre after.

Why, I submit, must the only interpretation, or any interpretation, suggest to Hotson that in this scene Tarlton's head is gradually emerging from the trap in the floor?

To clinch an argument on such evidence is impossible. One needs grounds more relative than this; to vouch this is no proof.

I would submit, too, that even the Rosetta Stone of Dr. Hotson's case, the lines from a Poem to the King's Most Sacred Majesty (1663), contain enough ambiguity to be useless as definitive evidence. The theatre

Is in the Scene so various now become,  
That the Dramatick plots of Greece, and Rome,

Compar'd to ours, do from their height decline,  
And shrink in all the compass of design.

Where Poets did large Palaces intend.  
The spacious purpose narrowly did end  
In Houses, where great Monarchs had no more

Removes (changes of quarters or residence) then Two low Rooms upon a Floor:  
Whose thow lights were so transparent made,

That Expectation (which should be delay'd



## THE ITINERANT SCHOLAR

At the National Council of Teachers of English Golden Anniversary Convention, Chicago, Nov. 25, 1960:

IN THE TEACHING OF SHAKESPEARE  
AVOID AVOIDANCE

Hardin Craig, University of Missouri

The "acknowledged plenitude of the cerebral cortex" - the brain is theoretically capable of nine billion synaptic connections or possibilities of ideation - is sufficient to explain Shakespeare without a great deal of "hocus pocus." Teachers wrong Shakespeare when they occupy time with background rather than Shakespeare himself. As Woodrow Wilson has said, "the side show has swallowed the circus."

The giving of epitomes of scholarship is not sufficient. Teaching is not enough; there must be learning as well. Influenced by German scholarship some teachers have become scholars and specialists and no longer concern themselves with interpretations which is "their natural and original function."

When this scholarship obscures Shakespeare, "it is wholly unjustifiable." Experiencing Shakespeare is the only complete road to truth. Students must learn Shakespeare for themselves and take him "into their souls."

So far as school and college students are concerned, ten thousand books of Shakespeare criticism and fifty thousand articles could be burnt without affecting their prospects. All that they can ever get from Shakespeare in the way of mental development and creative urge must come from what they themselves learn and feel.

The avoidance of Shakespeare himself and the substitution of the scholarship is a pernicious influence. Even study by radio and television is making "avoidance" official by emphasizing "looking" rather than reading and study. "My contention is that the only discoverable reason for teaching Shakespeare in schools and colleges is that our young people will be benefited morally and intellectually by knowing Shakespeare."

"I have flatly denied that this benefit can be secured by knowing things about Shakespeare and not Shakespeare himself. I speak from more than a half a century of experience in the teaching of Shakespeare when I say that I put more faith in the experience of feeling sorry for Romeo and Juliet, of admiring Portia and Imogen, being shocked at the behavior of Goneril and Regan, feeling the terror wrought by Macbeth and his Lady and seeing the essential victories achieved by Brutus and Hamlet in spite of the loss of their lives than I do in any amount of stagecraft, hypercriticism and learned diversion."

And kept a while from being satisfi'd)  
Saw, on a sodain, all that Art should hide;  
Whilst at the plain contrivance all did

grieve;  
For it was there no trespass to decieve.  
If we the antient Drama have refin'd. . .

Dr. Hotson interprets the monarchs as Elizabethan, the Houses as mansions, and the "thorow lights" as transparent mansions. I find it not impossible to read this solely as a statement of what Davenant thought were the conditions in Greece and Rome. The "Houses" might mean theatres; the "thorow lights" might have been transparent, but not necessarily the rooms, and the verb "did . . . intend" as compared with the "now become" in the first line makes it possible that all this referred to ancient rather than Elizabethan conditions.

There is much more to say, but I have already gone far beyond my editorial space. Readers will probably want to comment pro and con. If so, additional space will be allotted. The editor will gladly accept an invitation to travel any reasonable distance to see a play staged by Hotson's method. L.M.

## TEACHING SHAKESPEARE — PAST and PRESENT

Louis Marder, Kent State University

An academic revolution might be started by saying that Shakespeare ought to be eliminated from the academic curriculum. It is not being suggested, but that suggestion and other objections have been made in the past few years: Shakespeare's plots, philosophy, and characters are unsuitable for students, the plays are beyond their comprehension, poor reading kills the plays in class, dreary scholarship bores the students, and some of the plays breed racial intolerance.

It goes without saying that proper reading and interpretation eliminates all these objections, but nevertheless objection to Shakespeare and the drama has been prevalent from his own time until the present. Objections were overcome slowly. A 17th century teacher had his boys perform *HVil*, Steele urged Shakespeare for student in the *Tattler*, books of elocution and rhetoric cited the great speeches, students translated him into Greek and Latin, Lamb and Bowdler made him acceptable to young people and families, and finally after about 30 years of partial study in the schools, Shakespeare became "official" when in 1858 he was included as a subject on the entrance examinations to Oxford and Cambridge.

From no teaching there was soon overteaching, and students parsed their way through the plays, memorized the footnotes, and learned to dislike Shakespeare. Other enjoyed Shakespeare through the "project" method, but learned little. Proper teaching makes Shakespeare not a means to an end, but an end in himself. Scholarship of many kinds is necessary to bridge the gap of 350 years, language must be explained.

If notes are used for discovering and eliciting meaning and for stimulating curiosity—and the end is the beauty and truth of Shakespeare, then Shakespeare might become desirable to students AND their teachers.

## SHAKESPEARE'S EFFIGY

The Editor is very desirous of locating all the known full-sized replicas of Shakespeare's Monumental Effigy in Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon.

Any clues or information will be gratefully acknowledged.

## The Complete Works Of Shakespeare

By Hardin Craig

This text includes all the plays, sonnets, and poems of Shakespeare and offers a complete coverage of his life and times.

Illustrated, 1375 pages \$9.00 list

SCOTT,  
FORESMAN AND COMPANY

Chicago Atlanta Dallas Palo Alto  
Fair Lawn, N. J.

## Charles Macklin

## AN ACTOR'S LIFE

By William W. Appleton. A pioneer in theatrical realism, Charles Macklin (1699-1797) was one of the most important English actors of the eighteenth century, and he made a significant contribution to the development of the modern theater. This first biography of Macklin in seventy years draws directly on unused manuscript sources (among others, those at Harvard, the Folger Library, the Huntington Library, and the Garrick Club), and illuminates the history of the theater in eighteenth century England and Ireland. \$5.00

## Shakespeare and the Craft of Tragedy

By William Rosen. A refreshing study of Shakespearean plot and structures, which treats Shakespeare as what in fact he was — a working playwright. Mr. Rosen discusses how the audience's point of view toward the protagonists in *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Coriolanus* is established. The book is enlivened with pertinent critical comment touching on the insights of modern writers from Melville to Miller. \$4.75

## The Professional Writer In Elizabethan England

## A STUDY OF NON-DRAMATIC LITERATURE

By Edwin H. Miller. With the spread of printing in Elizabeth's time, the lower classes were learning to read. They wanted books—entertainment, information, self-help. Here is the fascinating story of the writers who answered their demands. Eager for fame, victimized by printers, usually dying in poverty, they brought books from the closed aristocracy to the open market. \$5.00

## Ben Jonson and the Language of Prose Comedy

By Jonas A. Barish. "No glasse renders a mans forme, or likeness, so true as his speech," Jonson wrote in his *Discoveries*. Seeking for Jonson's "likeness" in his language, Mr. Barish analyzes his prose for significant patterns. As individual characters' speech patterns are examined in relation to the plays' dramatic totalities, scrutiny of style expands into interpretation of the whole art of Jonsonian comedy. \$5.00

 HARVARD  
UNIVERSITY PRESS



## SHAKESPEARE AND RELIGION: A BIBLIOGRAPHY

By Robert C. Steensma, State University of South Dakota

Shakespeare's religious thought has intrigued several generations of scholars; the range of the resultant scholarship varies from studies of his use of religious themes and ideas to attempts to prove him a loyal Anglican, Catholic, or Puritan. Robert Stevenson's recent *Shakespeare's Religious Frontier* (The Hague, 1958) is indicative of this continuing interest in Shakespeare and religion.

The following bibliography consists of books and articles treating Shakespeare's attitude toward religion as reflected in his works and life. Books marked with an asterisk have excellent bibliographies which should also be consulted.

Works dealing with the religious background of Shakespeare's England are too numerous to be listed here. Bibliographies of such books may be found in the following: F. W. Bateson (ed.), *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* (Cambridge, 1941, 1957), I, 319-325, and V, 172-175; J. B. Black, *The Reign of Elizabeth, 1558-1603* (Oxford, 1936), pp. 416-417; Douglas Bush, *English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 1945), pp. 463-474; Godfrey Davies, *The Early Stuarts, 1603-1660* (Oxford, 1937), pp. 420-422; and C. S. Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century Excluding Drama* (Oxford, 1954), pp. 615-618.

Abend, Murray. "Some Biblical Influences in Shakespeare's Plays," *N&Q*, CXCIV (1950), 554-558.

Ackermann, C. *The Bible in Shakespeare*. Columbus, Ohio, 1936.

Addy, S. O. "Shakespeare's Puritan Relations," *N&G*, CLIV (1928), 273-276.

Anders, H. R. D. "The Bible and the Prayer Book," *Shakespeare's Books*. (Berlin, 1904), pp. 196-221.

Barnet, Sylvan. "Some Limitations of a Christian Approach to Shakespeare," *ELH*, XXII (1955), 81-92.

Battenhouse, Roy W. "The Ghost in Hamlet: A Catholic 'Lynchpin'?" *SP*, XLVIII (1951), 161-192.

"Measure for Measure and Christian Atonement," *PMLA*, LXI (1946), 1029-1059.

Bayne, Ronald. "Religion," *Shakespeare's England*, Vol. I, 48-78.

Beeching, H. C. "On the Religion of Shakespeare," *Shakespeare's Works* (Stratford Town Edition; Stratford, 1904-1907), X.

Bell, James. *Biblical and Shakespearian Characters Compared*. London, 1896.

Bernays, Michael. "Shakespeare ein katholischer Dichter," *SJ*, I (1865), 220-299.

Bowden, Henry S. *The Religion of Shakespeare*. London, 1899.

Bryant, J. A., Jr. "Prince Hal and the Ephesians," *SR*, LXVII (1959), 204-219.

Bullock, Charles. *Shakespeare's Debt to the Bible*. London, n.d.

Burgess, W. *The Bible in Shakespeare*. New York, 1918.

Butler, L. F. "Was Shakespeare a Catholic?" *Irish Monthly*, LXII (1934), 173-180.

Campbell, Oscar J. "The Salvation of Lear," *ELH*, XV (1948), 93-109.

Carter, Thomas. *Shakespeare and Holy Scripture*. London, 1905.

"Shakespeare, Puritan and Recusant." Edinburgh and London, 1897.

Cauthen, I. B., Jr. "Richard II and the Image of the Betrayed Christ," *Renaissance Papers* (Columbia, South Carolina, 1954), pp. 45-48.

Clark, Cumberland. *The Eternal Shakespeare*. London, 1930.

Clark, Cumberland. *So the Supernatural*. London, 1931, pp. 159-332.

Coleman, Hamilton. *Shakespeare and the Bible*. New York, 1955.

Counterline, J. D. *The Religious Belief of Shakespeare*. New York 1906.

Daniels, R. B. "Shakespeare and the Puritans," *SAB*, XIII (1938), 40-53.

Davis, Edward. "Shakespeare and Religion," *Jewish Affairs*, August, 1959, pp. 45-47.

DeGroot, J. H. *The Shakespeares and 'the Old Faith'*. New York, 1946.

Doerr, A. "Um Shakespeares Katholizismus," *Schöne Zukunft*, VI (1931), 826-828.

Eaton, T. R. *Shakespeare and the Bible*. London, 1858.

Ellis, C. *Shakespeare and the Bible*. London, 1897.

London, 1897. "The Christ in Shakespeare."

Everitt, Ephraim. "Bricks Without Straw," *SAB*, XXIII (1948), 105.

Ewen, C. L. and A. J. H. John Shakespeare's Confession of Faith," *N&Q*, CLXXXIV (1934), 145.

Fleay, Frederick G. "Shakespeare and Puritanism," *Anglia*, VII (1884), 223-231.

French, Carolyn S. "Shakespeare's 'Folly': King Lear," *SQ*, X (1959), 523-529.

Fripp, E. I. "The Religion of Shakespeare's Father," *Hibbert Journal*, XXVI (1928), 535-547.

"Shakespeare's Bible," *Shakespeare: Man and Artist* (London, 1938), I, 98-102.

Glover, A. S. B. "Shakespeare and the Jewish Liturgy," *TLS*, May 22, 1953, p. 333.

Greenwald, G. M. *Shakespeare's Attitude towards the Catholic Church in 'King John.'* Washington, 1938.

Harris, M. D. "Shakespeare and the Religious Drama," *N&Q*, CLXV (1933), 254-255.

Howse, Ernest M. *Spiritual Values in Shakespeare*. Nashville, 1955.

Huhn, M. "Shakespeare's Conception of the Clergy," *SAB*, XI (1936), 161-170.

Jack, Jane H. "Macbeth, King James, and the Bible," *ELH*, XXII (1955), 173-193.

James, J. C. "Religion in Shakespeare," *London Quarterly Review*, CLV (1931), 239-249.

Klein, T. "Die religiöse Wirklichkeit bei Shakespeare," *Zeitwende*, XIII (1937), 641-650.

Koepfel, Emil. "Konfessionelle Strömungen in der dramatischen Dichtung des Zeitalters der beiden ersten Stuart-Könige," *SJ*, XL (1904), xvi-xxix.

Lee, Sidney. "Shakespeare and the Spanish Inquisition," *Living Age*, CCCXIII (May 20, 1922), 460-466.

Little, Hubert V. *The Gospel According to Shakespeare*. London, 1956.

Looten, Camille. *Shakespeare et la Religion*. Paris, 1824.

Macht, David I. "Biblical Allusions in Shakespeare's 'The Tempest' in the Light of Hebrew Exegesis," *The Jewish Forum*, 1955.

Mangasarian, M. M. *What Was the Religion of Shakespeare?* Chicago, 1909.

Masefield, John. *Shakespeare and Spiritual Life*. Oxford, 1924.

Matthes, H. "Shakespeares Dramen, Theologische Gesehen," *Luthertum*, XLVIII (1937), 263-267.

Maura, Sister. *Shakespeare's Catholicism*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1924.

Moldenhawer, J. V. "Shakespeare Answers the Query 'What is Man?'" *ATR*, XXVII (1945), 54-57.

"Shakespeare's Creed," *The Voice of Books* (New York, 1940), 26-40.

Morton, R. K. "The Faith of Shakespeare," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, LXXXIX (1932), 295-308.

Mutschmann, Heinrich and Wensterdorf, K. *Shakespeare and Catholicism*. New York, 1952.

Myrick, K. O. "The Theme of Damnation in Shakespearean Tragedy," *SP*, XXXVIII (1941), 221-245.

Nathan, Norman. "Duncan, Macbeth, and Jeremiah," *N&Q*, CXCIX (1954), 243.

"Shylock, Jacob, and God's Judgment," *SQ*, I (1950), 255-259.

Noble, Richmond. *Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge and Use of the Book of Common Prayer*. New York, 1935.

Plumtre, C. J. *The Religion and Morality of Shakespeare's Works*. London, 1873.

Pope, Elizabeth M. "Shakespeare on Hell," *SQ*, I (1950), 162-164.

Quinlan, Maurice J. "Shakespeare and the Catholic Burial Services," *SQ*, V (1954), 303-306.

Raich, J. M. *Shakespeares Stellung zur katholischen Religion*. Mainz, 1884.

Rashbrook, R. F. "Shakespeare and the Bible," *N&Q*, CXCIV (1952), 49-50.

Raybould, A. "Our Catholic Shakespeare," *Catholic World*, CXXXV (1932), 319-323.

Reichensperger, A. *William Shakespeare, insbesondere sein Verhältnis zum Mittelalter und zum Gegenwart*. Munster, 1872.

Rio, A. F. *Shakespeare*. Paris, 1864.

Ross, Lawrence J. "Two Supposed Defects in Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge," *N&Q*, N.S. V (1958), 462-463.

Roth, Cecil. "Shakespeare and the Jewish Liturgy," *TLS*, May 15, 1933, p. 317.

Rubenstein, Gilbert M. "Review of Shakespeare and Catholicism," *College and University*, 1953.

Santayana, George. "The Absence of Religion in Shakespeare," *Little Essays Drawn from the Writings of George Santayana*, ed. Logan P. Smith (London, 1920), pp. 188-190.

Saunders, T. "Religion and Tragedy," *Dalhousie Review*, XXIV (1944), 283-297.

Schindler, P. "Der Religiöse Baggrund for Shakespeare," *Edda*, XXXVIII (1938), 340-349.

Schwartzkopf, A. *Shakespeare in seiner Bedeutung für die Kirche unserer Tage*. Halle, 1864.

Seibel, George. *The Religion of Shakespeare*. London, 1924.

Selkirk, J. B. *Bible Truths with Shakespearean Parallels*. London, 1872.

Semper, Msgr. I. J. "Shakespeare and His Catholicizers," *ShN*, IV (1954), 6.

Siegel, Paul N. "Echoes of the Bible Story in Macbeth," *N&Q*, N.S. II (1955), 142-143.

"Shylock and the Puritan," *Studies in Shakespeare*, ed. Arthur D. Matthews and Clark M. Emery (Miami, 1953), pp. 129-138.

Simpson, Richard. "Shakespeare's View of the Church," *Transactions of the New Shakespeare Society*, 1874, Pt. 2 (London, 1875), pp. 438-439.

Smart, John S. *Shakespeare: Truth and Tradition* (London, 1928), pp. 66-72.

\*Stevenson, Robert. *Shakespeare's Religious Frontier*. The Hague, 1958.

Swinburne, C. W. *Sacred and Shakespearian Affinities*. London, 1890.

Taylor, G. C. "Some Patristic Conventions Common to Shakespeare and Milton," *SP*, XXVIII (1931), 652-655.

Taylor, J. "Shakespeare's Religion," *Shakespeare*, VI (1887), 477-483.

Tucker, William. "Shakespeare, a Catholic?" *Catholic World*, CLXXVI (October, 1952), 14-19.

Walker, L. P., O. P. "How Catholic Was Shakespeare?" *Dominicana*, XL (1935), 159-177.

Weber, C. J. "On Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge," *SAB*, XI (1936), 184.

Wilkes, George. *Shakespeare from an American point of view*. N. Y., Appleton, 1877.

Wordsworth, Bishop. *On Shakespeare's Knowledge and Use of the Bible*. London, 1864.



## BIOGRAPHY IN BRIEF

## Edwin Booth - "The Greatest Hamlet"

John J. McAleer, Boston College

When, as Hamlet, Edwin Booth (1833-93) made his last stage appearance, in April 1891, David Belasco said, "The familiar words seemed to come from Booth's lips for the first time, to utter thoughts then first formulated."

Yet, thirty years before, another admirer, Booth's brother John Wilkes, had said, "He is Hamlet - melancholy and all." The mantle of Junius Brutus Booth, once hailed as Kean's "duplicate," thus may seem to have fallen easily upon his son's shoulders. But the 19th century's greatest American actor, to Germans, "the greatest Hamlet of all time," did not casually win fame. No great actor had more personal tragedies to bear.

What Lear has spent every offstage moment caring for a wife hopelessly insane? What Romeo twice married his stage Juliets only to have death take them? What Brutus was blood brother to an infamous assassin? Add to these woes the loss of \$40,000 in properties when the Winter Garden burned, the bankruptcy which took the \$500,000 Booth Shakespearean Theatre, and one has a modest notion of the forces that shaped the soul of Edwin Booth.

Junius Booth drank. At fifteen Edwin became his guardian, traveling with him to see that he kept his engagements. The boy who crouched by dressing room keyholes, listening to Junius on stage playing Iago and Shylock, thrilled to the miracle of Shakespeare. Yet his father thought young Junius "the Booth in the family," and left to him the cardboard crown of Richard III. His mother doted on Wilkes. Edwin was left to prove himself against the doubts of his family. Ironically it fell to him, after Wilkes assassinated Lincoln, to restore honor to his family name.

Of Booth's Shakespearean roles, Hamlet, Lear, Iago, Macbeth, Richard III, Brutus, Othello, Richard II, Romeo, Antony, Cassius, Benedict, and Wolsey, the first six were his best. His villains were excellent, though he deplored his own Shylock, thinking the part "earthy." The memory of his first wife so moved him he played lovers badly. Only Otis Skinner liked his Othello. He failed first at Lear and between 1860-70 would not essay the part. In 1881 London thought "Nothing finer has been known upon the English stage." At Booth's curtain call there, Charles Reade whispered to a friend, "Poor old man, they have broken his mind, but see how he holds his dignity!"

On 22 March 1865 Booth ended, in New York, a record run of 100 nights as Hamlet. During the engagement he had moaned, "This terrible success of Hamlet seems to swallow up everything else theatrical." A gold medal commemorating this achievement was not given him until two years later, owing to the sudden notoriety Wilkes had conferred on the family.

Booth's theater opened in February 1869. Booth, who began his career as Tressel in Cibber's version of Richard III, insisted the true Shakespearean text be used for all performances there. The opening production, *Romeo and Juliet*, had not been so produced since Betterton's day. Booth pioneered this necessary reform. He also strove for sets and properties worthy of Shakespeare's lines. His acting style, once in his father's ranting manner, now was strikingly natural and enhanced these fine productions. Skinner says, "Extravagance never marred his work," and E. A. Sothorn, "His acting was so free from exaggeration that he baffled imitation."

Booth died at "The Players" club which he founded, and left to it his Shakespearean library. His costumes went at auction. Upon his coffin Julia Ward Howe placed a sprig of rosemary. As his funeral service was being read the Ford Theatre collapsed killing 22. Booth never played Washington after Lincoln's

## The Unmasked Spirit

by

Jenny Lind Porter

Was there a time when the young Shakespeare stood

Heartsick with visions of his labor lost,

When all experience was a Birnam Wood

And all the shining branches waved and tossed

But to conceal a death's head? Did he hold

The threadworn curtain an eye's length aside

And shiver at the faces strange and cold

From whom he had not taken pains to hide

Symbols they knew not, beauty beyond reach,

The unmasked spirit as it laughed and cried,

Caught in a subtle indirection's speech

Which yonder wooden faces might deride?

What luxury to write a private page

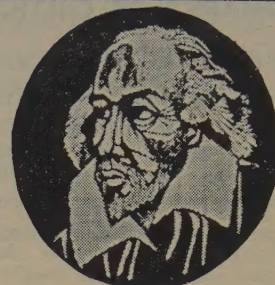
That will not be a stranger's world and stage!

—West Texas State College

death but gave innumerable tours elsewhere in America, and abroad. He forfeited much of his fortune to a curious inability to read character offstage, often being hoodwinked by false friends.

At the end of his career Booth prepared notes on *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice* for Furness's variorum editions. Their excellence makes it a matter of regret that he left no such commentaries on *Hamlet* and *King Lear*.

Two recordings made by Booth in 1890, of *Hamlet* and *Othello*, confirm the verdict of his age that he was an artist without peer.



"I will enchant thine ear"

VENUS and ADONIS

Announcing the consummate recordings of the complete works of Shakespeare . . . produced for the Shakespeare Recording Society by Caedmon, leading name in spoken-word records . . . and featuring the outstanding actors and actresses of our time, including:

Sir John Gielgud  
Sir Michael Redgrave  
Sir Ralph Richardson  
Dame Edith Evans  
Dame Peggy Ashcroft  
Clair Bloom  
Siobhan McKenna  
Margaret Leighton  
Trevor Howard  
Anthony Quayle

Now available: *Macbeth*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Othello* and *The Winter's Tale*. Write today for full information on how you can order these memorable performances — as well as forthcoming releases — at considerable savings over retail costs.  
Dept. N

*The Shakespeare Recording Society*

277 Fifth Avenue

New York 16, N.Y.



Announcing the publication

# THE LONDON STAGE

1660-1800

*A comprehensive view of plays,  
casts, box-receipts, contemporary  
comment, compiled from  
newspapers and theatrical  
diaries of the period.*

PART 2: 1700-1729

*Edited and with an introduction by Emmett L. Avery.*  
Part 2 — the first section of this monumental work to be published — offers a lively view of the theatres in early Eighteenth-Century London. The entire Work, to be completed within the next five years, will comprise ten-to-twelve volumes, each approximately 700 pages, illustrated and indexed. All will be bound in buckram and stamped in genuine gold.

Part 2 in two volumes. \$50.

Order from your bookseller or write

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY PRESS  
Carbondale, Illinois



## LANDMARKS OF CRITICISM

Edited by  
Edmund Creeth, University of Michigan

Shakespeare's English Kings (1889)

by Walter Pater

In "Appreciations" (London, 1911), 185-204

A brittle glory shineth in his face:

As brittle as the glory is the face.

In his non-English historical plays, Shakespeare displays his genius for delineating heroic human character in heroic circumstances, and perhaps if he had chosen to deal with *Coeur-de-Lion* or *Edward I* he would have sounded the same depths as in *JC* and *Macbeth*. But Shakespeare's English histories stress the pathetic irony of kingship in which average humanity feels the pressure of great events. "It is no *Henriade* he writes, and no history of the English people, but sad fortunes of some English kings as conspicuous examples of the ordinary human condition. As in a children's story, all princes are in extremes. . . . Such is the motive that gives unity to these unequal and intermittent contributions" to a dramatic chronicle.

True, John, with whom he begins, possesses kingly qualities—counteracted by a reckless impiety forced on our attention by his terrible end. This, in an artistic triumph, Shakespeare sets amid surroundings suggestive of all that is perennially peaceful, and the presence of the bastard Faulconbridge "contributes to an almost coarse assertion of the force of nature, of the somewhat ironic preponderance of nature over men's artificial arrangements, to the recognition of a certain potent natural aristocracy, which is far from being always identical with that more formal, heraldic one." Henry IV, too, has a certain force and kingcraft, but Shakespeare reaches poetic heights in the soliloquy in which royalty longs for the toiler's sleep. The popularity of Henry V and the homely and earthy humor of the plays in which he figures emphasize his common humanity, and he, the greatest of the kings, strikes the keynote himself, speaking incognito to a common soldier on the field: "Through I speak it to you, I think the king is but a man, as I am. . . : all his senses have but common conditions." His kingly speeches, like those of other kings weak enough except in speech, have the effect only of personal embellishment. "They combine to one result with the merely outward and ceremonial ornaments of royalty. . . ." The character of Henry VI suited well his design for these plays. Even Richard III, touched with a heroism that is spoiled, like John's, by something of criminal madness, "reaches his highest level of tragic expression when circumstances reduced him to terms of mere human nature." And when he came to Henry VIII, not the superficial splendor of the king, but the ascendant nature of the butcher's son and Katherine's subdued version of the sad fortunes of Richard II define Shakespeare's central interest.

Richard II exposes Shakespeare's recurrent attitude toward the civil wars. Shakespeare does not lack a sense of magnanimity of warriors, but it is typical of him that the vision of young Harry with his beaver on, rising from the ground like feather'd Mercury, should be followed by "They come like sacrifices in their trim." In *R II* we may detect "a peculiar recoil from the mere instruments of warfare, the contact of 'rude ribs,' " as if the soft beauty of Richard took effect by contrast upon his surroundings. He is the exquisite poet among the kings, able to refresh with his figures "the tritest aspects of that ironic contrast between the pretensions of a king and the actual necessities of his destiny." Shakespeare makes him overconfident in his faith in the rite of coronation and that divine right of kings which lends them less power over others than infatuation with themselves. Of all his attributes, that which never fails him is his royal utterance. It lends grace to that "rite of degradation" which might otherwise

## Dissertation Digest

Edited by  
Jack R. Brown, Marshall College

Mary Carol Culver, *A Study of the Imagery in Shakespeare's "As You Like It"*, University of Pittsburgh. 1959, 111 pages.

Criticism has tended to ignore the imagery of Shakespeare's comedies, perhaps chiefly because this imagery does not seem to form the type of thematic pattern found frequently in the tragedies. This study of *AYLI*, however, demonstrates that imagery in this comedy has been "carefully chosen" and is of "primary importance."

Imagery (limited in this study to figurative comparison: metaphor, simile, personification) has two important functions in *AYLI*: it "creates atmosphere and controls the tone." The atmosphere is a combination of the real and the ideal, Tone, more important than atmosphere, is satiric and non-satiric, seeming both to ridicule and to admire pastoral and romantic literature and conventions.

Tone is established principally through the imagery used by the chief satirists: Rosalind (of primary importance), Celia, Jacques, and Touchstone. It is evident in the imagery employed by these characters that the impossible idealism presented in the play is subject to the attack of common sense, but is "not meant to be utterly destroyed."

This close study of imagery refutes the mistaken belief that *AYLI* is one of Shakespeare's "most casual pieces of work." In accordance with the general tendency of twentieth century criticism, the dissertation demonstrates again that Shakespeare was not an "erratic genius," but a careful, conscious artist.

John C. Ellis, *Character and Action in "King Lear," A Reconsideration of Some Recent Criticism*, University of Oregon, 1959, 265 pages.

"Focusing especially on the protagonist," this study of *King Lear* argues against the critical interpretations of three outstanding Shakespeareans of the twentieth century, Elmer E. Stoll, Levin L. Schucking, and G. Wilson Knight.

Professor Stoll finds *Lear* "Psychologically inconsistent." Professor Schucking, though believing with Stoll that Shakespeare was "seldom concerned with consistency and credibility," finds *Lear* more than usually consistent, but judges the tragedy weakened by this consistency. Professor Knight, stressing both incredibility and fantasticality, relies on a "distorted view of character" to achieve his interpretation of the drama as a Purgatorial vision.

Against these critical views, Dr. Ellis argues that *Lear*, "endowed with a nobility of character properly tragic," is both consistent and credible. The underlying theme of his delirium, related to his earlier behavior, is the repression of guilt. The dissertation emphasizes *Lear*'s "Psychological continuity" and concludes that "the character of *Lear* and the structure of the play are not mutually exclusive, but interdependent."

be merely abject. Within the poetic bounds of the play he nearly fulfills his desire—"O! that I were as great / As is my grief. . . ." And his grief becomes nothing less than a central expression of all that in the revolutions of Fortune's wheel goes down in the world." The sense that after all the happiness and grief of kingship are those of children lends its finer accent to his speeches. The sight of his body, exposed by Henry to show that his end was natural, reminds us of Richard's two falacious prerogatives, his personal beauty and his anointing.

*R II* belongs to the small number of plays in which dramatic form, its intellectual scope enlarged and complicated, returns to choric unity. In such singleness or identity of impression, rather than in mechanical limitations, lies the true, imaginative secret of dramatic unity.

## "Split-stage" Technique in Shakespeare

That the "split-stage" technique can be effectively used in the staging of Shakespeare and that this method may have been used on Shakespeare's own stage was made evident by a production of *Troilus and Cressida* which inaugurated the first season at Harvard University's widely-heralded Loeb Drama Center.

Designed by George Izenour, the stage makes possible productions designed for a variety of different playing conditions. Director Stephen Aaron made exciting intelligent use of a stage surrounded in the Elizabethan manner on three sides by the audience. The company played consciously to all parts of the theatre; the stage was bare except for some ascending step-platforms in the rear.

One dramaturgical device, apparently an innovation, deserves special notice, because it was so suggestive of the possibility of solving certain problems in the staging of other plays of Shakespeare's.

Pandarus and Cressida in this production review the Trojan forces in *I.ii* by walking along the "walls" of Troy at the downstage edge of the apron where they look down upon an audience thus asked to assume that the warriors are passing below. Pandarus says, "shall we stand up here, and see them as they pass toward Ilium? . . ."

And Cressida confirms the imaginative demand, "Here come more."

Both Pandarus and Cressida point and look down throughout this part of the scene, while upstage behind them the various warriors pass silently in review. Characters like Hector and Troilus gestured to the hallooing Pandarus imagined as being someplace above and in front of them.

In other words, the production demanded from the audience an acceptance of a "split" space technique, such as the film employs.

In this manner the drama between Pandarus and Cressida, is emphasized rather than the spectacle of the procession. In a less imaginative staging of the scene, "up here" would undoubtedly have become "above."

Familiarizing the audience with the technique in *I.ii*, the company availed itself confidently of the same tactic in *V.ii*, where Troilus and Ulysses played downstage on one side of the apron and Thersites on the other. From these stations, they observed Cressida's betrayal before Calchas' tent, which was imagined as being on a sort of rise someplace at the rear of the theatre, that is, above and behind the audience. The betrayal itself was played upstage.

Although there was no gestured link between the two groups as in *I.ii*, the technique again emphasized the center of dramatic interest: Troilus' agonized response and Thersites' choric commentary. The technique strongly suggests the possibility of coming to a better dramaturgical understanding of Shakespeare, especially if he himself anticipated the procedure, for example, in the Mousetrap scene in *Hamlet*, or in such eavesdropping scenes as those in *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Twelfth Night*.

Max Bluestone, Babson Institute

## A Guide to Shakespearean Tragedy

by  
David S. Berkeley

Students of Shakespeare courses frequently come to class with vague apprehensions of plots and characters. This newly published supplementary text invites study of 3,402 organized questions, 66 critical quotations, and 65 annotated bibliographical items. A full semester's homework for the students means freedom for the lecturer to treat special topics he finds interesting. 192 pp. \$2.50

Oklahoma State University  
Book Store  
Stillwater, Oklahoma



## Digest of

## CRITICAL REVIEWS

Ed. by Max Bluestone, Babson Institute

T. W. Baldwin. *On the Literary Genetics of Shakespeare's Plays, 1592-1594*, Urbana, Illinois, University of Illinois Press, 1959, Pp. ix-562, \$8.50.

"Roughly, the first half of (this) book is devoted to such problems as the chronology of non-Shakespearean Elizabethan plays (Greene, Marlowe, Peele, and Kyd each get a chapter) and the casting patterns of Elizabethan companies (five chapters). The second half is devoted more directly to Shakespeare.

"There is much interesting information here, but there is much that is only an impediment to learning . . . Baldwin's knowledge of Elizabethan writing is enormous, but because he makes unconvincing assumptions, one must question most of his conclusions . . . The most pervasive assumption . . . seems to be that an image grows with successive use. An image with an extra twist, that is, is held to be later than a similar but simpler one . . . (but) the proof is not at all clear to me . . . Almost every page (except those summarizing plays and pamphlets) makes some such arguable assumption.

"In addition to being skeptical of Baldwin's assumptions, the reader may be skeptical of Baldwin's reading of much evidence . . . On such important subjects (as Marlowe's borrowings from Shakespeare) Baldwin has many learned pages, most of which require and deserve careful scrutiny.

"But after scrutinizing Baldwin's unconventional ideas, most readers will (I think) find little that they can accept. The journey is arduous (the first chapter is a fifty-five-page effort to prove that there is no charge of plagiarism in Greene's attack on the 'upstart crow'); the final hour, however, is lightened by a highly readable concluding chapter on 'Johannes Factotum.' "

Sylvan Barnet, MP, LVIII (August 1960), 57-59.

## Some Shakespearean Themes

L. C. Knights. In a series of provocative essays a distinguished British critic has traced the emergence and development of some of the major themes in the plays of Shakespeare's maturity, up to and including the period of the great tragedies.

\$3.50

## An Approach to Hamlet

L. C. Knights. This study proposes to set Hamlet in relation to the other plays of Shakespeare, and to see it in a particular perspective: its concern with the relationship between the reflective personality and the world outside. Hamlet's failure is seen as "the corruption of consciousness" — a corruption that derives from an exclusive concentration on evil.

\$2.75

Order from your bookstore, please  
STANFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Bernard Spivack. *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil*, New York, Columbia University Press 1958. Pp. ix-508, \$7.50

"The sub-title of this masterly appreciation of the evolution of the figure of the Vice through the Morality and transitional plays on to the late Elizabethan and Shakespearean stage is: 'The History of a Metaphor in Relation to his Major Villains.' "

"There is no attempt to merge Shakespeare with the disappearing dramatic era by which he, as well as his contemporaries, was influenced; and the result is a carefully defined and all the more palpable hit for 'convention' as distinct from 'character' criticism.

"The study begins and ends with Iago and notices, besides Richard III, two others of the infamous family of Shakespeare's smiling damned villains, Aaron the Moor and . . . Don John. . . Mr. Spivack does show how, as Shakespeare advanced from early work to mature tragedy, the old personification of evil was more subtly acclimatized without losing his characteristic tricks of self-revelation to the audience. . . This solution of the perennial problem of Iago's inadequately motivated malignity seems conclusive in terms of dramatic technique. . . (When) it comes to the villain's way of explaining himself to his audience Mr. Spivack's case seems proven to the hilt."

Roy Walker, MLR, LV (January, 1960), 102-103.

L. C. Knights. *Some Shakespearean Themes*, London, Chatto & Windus, 1959, 18s.

"The virtues of this book depend upon an extraordinarily subtle treatment of ethical values in poetry, . . . (but Mr. Knights) is continually aware that he is 'dealing with a free mind — one that is neither driven by, nor bent on driving an "idea." ' He follows his thematic clew without neglecting the labyrinthine diversities through which it compels him to travel.

"Shakespeare's feelings," he says in an unusually epigrammatic moment, 'are not afraid of each other.' First he explores the complex relations between private motive and public behaviour in the early history plays. Then he goes on to comment, with a kind of anxious shrewdness, on the growing preoccupation of the poet with Time, beginning in this chapter the description of a change in Shakespeare's interests that culminates in *Lear*.

The heart of the book is the magnificent essay on that play, for which Mr. Knights seems to be an ideal audience; certainly he has of the play what the play has of life — an 'inclusive vision of the whole,' including suffering as 'one of the permanent possibilities.' 'Affirmation in spite of everything . . . renewal' are his last words on *Lear*; the essay affirms his own critical creed and might renew his reader's. The rest of the book is naturally inferior to this . . .

Frank Kermode, *The Spectator*, 25 December 1959, p. 941.

## THE SHAKESPEARE NEWSLETTER

Published at Kent, Ohio

Editor and Publisher  
LOUIS MARDER

Department of English  
KENT STATE UNIVERSITY  
Kent, Ohio

Six issues annually—Feb., April, May,  
Sept., Nov., Dec.—Annual Subscription \$1.50

Entered as Second Class Matter at the  
Post Office, Kent, Ohio

Vol. X: No. 6 December, 1960

John Vyvyan. *The Shakespearean Ethic*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1959, pp. 208, 18s. (U.S. Barnes & Noble, 1960, \$3.75.)

"It is the purpose of this book to show that Shakespeare had convictions, that he expressed them, and that they are so related to his dramatic conceptions as to be mutually revealing. . . Mr. Vyvyan argues that in tragedy we are shown a soul, in many respects noble, but with a fatal flaw, which lays it open to special temptation. . . (Because) Shakespeare shows the tragic outcome to be the result of the hero's wrong action, we are in *Hamlet* (e.g.) justified in condemning the hero, and in regarding his progress as a gradual disowning of his higher self. . . Hamlet's dying vote for Fortinbras marks the completion of the hero's moral collapse.

"For to Shakespeare, Mr. Vyvyan believes, the accession of Fortinbras means the defeat of humanity and the perpetuation of genocide. . . Mr. Vyvyan carries his interpretation (of *Measure for Measure* in contrast to *Hamlet*) so far as to suggest that it was intended as an allegory of government by the Church in the seeming absence of Christ, for Shakespeare, it is agreed, believed in the higher morality of the Gospels, and the churches apparently did not.

"The author sustains his contrast between death-plays and birth-plays in his discussion of *Othello* and *The Winter's Tale*, and concludes with a consideration of certain allegorical features in *The Tempest*."

TLS, 27 February 1959, p. 114.

Dr. Max Bluestone, our new Digests of Critical Reviews editor obtained his Ph. D. at Harvard with a dissertation on Prose Fiction in Elizabethan Drama (SNL, 1959, p.34). He is currently working on a study of Shakespeare's expressive Dramaturgy. His edition of *Shakespeare's Contemporaries: Modern Studies in English Renaissance Drama* (with Norman Rabkin) will appear shortly.

## THE PARADOX OF TRAGEDY

by D. D. Raphael

A provocative analysis of the relation of drama and philosophy from Aeschylus to Arthur Miller. Discusses such topics as the pleasure principle in tragedy, the relation of tragedy and religion, and the important social and moral role of the dramatist as philosopher.

\$3.00

## SHAKESPEARE AND HIS BETTERS

by R. C. Churchill

A fascinating, objective history of the Shakespeare authorship controversy, accompanied by a thorough criticism of the principal theories that have been offered. " . . . an ample and fair-minded study of what has been surmised down the centuries."

—Ivor Brown. 20-page bibliography.

\$5.00



INDIANA UNIVERSITY  
PRESS  
BLOOMINGTON



## REVIEW OF PERIODICALS

Editors: Barbara Alden; Laurence A. Cummings, Yankton College; William C. McAvoy, St. Louis University; Marvin Spevack, City College (N. Y.); Joseph H. Summerell, N. Y. State University, Plattsburg; Uniclo Jack Violi, Fairleigh-Dickenson College.

Margaret Lee Wiley, Arlington State College, Coordinating Editor

### SHAKESPEARE'S STRAWBERRIES

Lawrence J. Ross of The Johns Hopkins University has produced a most interesting explanation of how the symbolism of Shakespeare's three uses of strawberries is supportive of the episodes in which they appear. He finds in Renaissance English needlework, emblems, and art clear evidence that the strawberry had a twofold symbolic and complex significative tradition behind it. In the one tradition it was associated with the "snake in the grass" who was likely to be hiding among strawberries growing low upon the ground, and eventually in this tradition it came to represent "any 'show of goodness', pleasurable to man's corrupt nature which can spiritually damage him through unwary moral choice." It is in this tradition that Ely's strawberries in *Richard III* (III.iv) take on added significance. In the second "tradition, however, the strawberry represents a real good. This is reflected in the passage about Hal (HV I.i. 60-62)." In *Othello* (III. 3. 433-435) the strawberries in Desdemona's handkerchief draw upon both traditions and "serve as a symbolic crystallization of the ironies inherent in the dramatic situation": Othello's "distorted image of Desdemona as perilously deceitful beauty, as the adulterous and hypocritical fair woman"; "the perfect righteousness he deludedly presumes himself to possess"; and the "fundamental confusions between appearance and reality at the center of the play's method and meaning." ("The Meaning of Strawberries in Shakespeare," *Studies in the Renaissance*, VII (1960), 225-240.)

### KNOW THYSELF - IF POSSIBLE

David M. Rein of Case Institute of Technology notes the futility of attempting to find reasons for Hamlet's delay and concludes that "there is no definite answer in the play. Shakespeare did not make the matter unequivocally clear." Scholars are reluctant to accept the conclusion because it seems to suggest defeat and gives an "unsupportable defect" to a great play. Othello, Macbeth, Brutus, Richard III reveal their motives — why not Hamlet? The answer is that Hamlet does not know. First he vows murder, then shrinks from the task, realizes his procrastination, thinks he is a coward, decides he needs more proof, justifies further delay with the play within a play, wonders whether he wants to live or not to live, and procrastinates again when he finds Claudius praying. After the Ghost comes to what is almost blunted purpose

### The IMPERSONAL HAMLET

F. V. Morley ponders T. S. Eliot's dictum about "objective correlatives" — finding "a chain of events adequate to the particular emotion" — agrees that Hamlet's disgust with his mother is not sufficient to make Hamlet what he is, and then suggests that the play is not about Hamlet and his mother but "a play about Danes." The old English traditions of the hock-tide and Hock Tuesday are related to the position of the Danes in England in King Alfred's time. Ritual plays on the defeat of the Danes in the 11th century were presented in England until the 17th century, if not later, and references show such performances before Elizabeth and in Warwickshire in 1575, which Shakespeare may have seen. The characteristic of such plays is that the Danes should "have the worst of it." Why should Hamlet be less effective than Othello and Macbeth? It was because Shakespeare had the old tradition in mind; his Dane must "be ineffectual." Hamlet therefore is merely a traditional character and is not presented as a person. "It is a supreme dramatic stroke; it is because Hamlet is so impersonal that so many men of different types, and conscientious objectors of opposite kinds, have identified their woes with Hamlet's and found in him a mirror of themselves." Hamlet can not win because the hocktide tradition is against him. The play is a play within a play of the broader hocktide tradition.

The Impersonal Hamlet, 5th Annual Riecker Memorial Lecture, The University of Arizona Bulletin Series, XXX:5 (July 1959), pp 7-22

Hamlet realizes his lack of self knowledge by saying "I do not know Why yet I live to say 'This thing's to do.'" (IV.4) Shortly after he quarters his thought and finds "one part wisdom And ever three parts coward." This is a remarkable statement of rationalization more than 300 years before the work got its modern meaning. Shakespeare is ahead of his time in perceiving that "a man's behavior could result from causes unknown to the man himself." Having pictured Hamlet's inability to find a reason for his delay, Shakespeare let the matter rest that way. To attempt to find a reason would be to search for that which "does not exist." ("Hamlet's Self-Knowledge," *The CEA Critic*, XXII:3 (March 1960), 8-9.)

The editor will gratefully accept offprints submitted for extraction in SNL. An autographed copy is especially welcome.

### OTHELLO PSYCHOANALYZED

In a very interesting article John V. Hagopian of the University of Michigan, realizing that formal psychology is less than a century old, hopes that his comments on Othello will not be equated with the "Freudian gobbledygook" of Ella Freeman Sharpe who because Hamlet talks of "fating," "slave's offal," and drinking "hot blood," concludes that the problem in Hamlet is "the oral sadism attendant upon oral frustration." Desdemona cannot be equated with "absolute innocence and purity," Othello "with great and simple virtue flawed only by the belief that men are what they seem," and Iago with " 'motiveless malignity,' the principle of evil incarnate." These cannot be shaken well together for the purpose of deriving a "didactic significance." Good Shakespearean drama is not always symbolic. "It presents us with a single, unique, whole human action involving the interrelationship of complex characters acting upon each other with clear (if not always conscious) motivation."

Gestalt psychology — "the study of perception involving the integrated structures or patterns of experience" — and Freudian psychology — "the study of the subconscious motives of human behavior" — assist in finding a solution. Because of Iago's excessive desire for revenge, Desdemona's attraction for Othello and her excessive interest in Cassio's cause, and Othello's readiness to believe the absurd, the play must be analyzed by Freudian principles because Freud makes it axiomatic that "whenever in human behavior response to a stimulus is far more powerful than the nature and intensity of the stimulus seems to warrant, we are justified in searching for reinforcements to that stimulus from the subconscious."

Iago a professional soldier reacted as he does because his notable honesty, recognized by all, has suddenly been scorned; the moral basis of his universe has collapsed. Cleverly he plays on Othello where he is weakest. When Othello says that "the young affects in me (are) defunct," "I am declined into the vale of years," and readily assents to going off to fight the enemy on his wedding night, we are given evidence of Othello's "sexual inadequacy." Iago emphasizes Desdemona's passion by saying she "must change for youth," and that "Her appetite shall play the god with his weak function."

Desdemona is also pictured as annoyed because the nuptial night has been postponed, annoyed because Iago comes to a "most lame and impotent conclusion" when she is expecting a more sensual remark, and so passionate in her appeal for Cassio that even Othello's "bed shall be his school." A man in Othello's conditions which such a wife would easily fear the worst and "no psychoanalytic gobbledygook" is needed to support it. What else could Othello think?

The "chain reaction that inevitably destroys them all in the grand, bloody conclusion" indicates "a marvelous dramatic gestalt" in which "the apparent excesses disappear as we adopt a proper psychological perspective."

"Psychology and the Coherent Form of Shakespeare's Othello," *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters*, XLV (1960), 373-380.

### THOMAS WATSON and VENUS and ADONIS

In an article on Thomas Watson's connections with Ovidian poetry in the English Renaissance, Walter F. Staton, Jr., of Southern Illinois University indicates a number of thought parallels between Watson's *Amyntas* and Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*. Staton argues that the "concluding section of the poem, from stanza 140 to 199 . . . is handled very much in the manner of Watson." ("Thomas Watson and Ovidian Poetry," *Studies in the Renaissance*, VI (1959), 243-250.)